

This is BILK Nr. 76 for March 1997. BILK is published bi-monthly by Ulrich Magin, Augustastr. 85, 76437 Rastatt, Germany.

BEHEMOTH

- Loch Ness: The movie company PolyGram has promised one million Pound to any person who can bring conclusive proof of Nessie's existence. To claim the money, you do not only have to find the creature but also to show physical proof of it. The existence of the new species must be confirmed by experts from the British Museum of Natural History or from the Institute for Marine Biology. The competition terminates at March 22, 1997, and the creature must not be less than 5 metres/17 ft in length. The competition is held with the "Express" newspaper and promotes the video release of the movie "Loch Ness". (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 27 January 1997, p.9)
- Loch Awe, Scotland: Baigent and Leigh's "Der Tempel und die Loge" (Bergisch Gladbach: Bastei Lübbe 1993, p. 18) mentions the Beathach Mor, the serpentine creature of Loch Awe which has a horse's head and 12 scaly legs.
- Loch Lochy, Scotland: On September 13, 1996, several people watched 3 humps like an upturned boat off Corriegour Lodge. The humps swam in circles and then vanished. (Fortean Times 95, p. 18)
- Argentina: Monsters in Lake Lolog and Nahuel Huapi in January 1996, see the INFO Journal 76, p. 39-40.
- Rastatt, Germany: In 1914, fisherman Gustav Meisch caught a crocodile in his nets at Plittersdorf in the Rhine. Speculation at that time assumed it had been the escaped pet of one of the ships that sailed the river. (Gerhard Schwarz: Rastatt und seine Dörfer. Plittersdorf: Schwarz 1990, p. 48-49)
- Bibliography: Much news on last year's Nessie sightings: Andreas Trottmann's Loch Ness Newsclipping Service, vol. 2, No. 4 -- infos on Loch Ness can also be found in Nessletter, issue 127 was the most recent to arrive here -- dinosaurs are discovered in a subterranean valley in a US-Japanese movie from 1976, "Der letzte Dinosaurier", screened by Pro7 (German TV channel) on January 13, 1997 -- a dragon plays a major role in "Dragonheart", a new fantasy movie starring Dennis Quaid. -- Michael D. Winkle on the sighting of a gigantic serpent in Maryland, middle of the last century, in the INFO Journal 76, p.30-31. Winkle theorises it was a "multi-dimensional reptile"! -- Out-of-place lizard (50 cm) caught in Barcelona, Spain, on July 15, 1995. (INFO Journal 76, p. 35)

ISIS

- Elster, Germany: According to Bernd Harder: "Die übersinnlichen Phänomene im Test", Augsburg: Weltbild 1996, p. 159, the German magazine "TeleVision" had a special edition on the X-Files, collecting reader's experiences. A certain Heike Kiegler reported that while swimming in a gravel pit, an "alien from the depths" frightened her. I do not have the source in question, but this seems to be another alien/waterman overlap.
- On German TV channel RTL2, Barbara Peeters' movie "Humanoids from the Deep" was screened on November 18, 1996. Mutations, half fish, half man, rape innocent beach girls.
- Chupacabras article in INFO Journal 76, p. 12-18

LEVIATHAN

- Beaulieu Firth, Scotland: Twenty boys from Newcastle saw a "monster" in the Beaulieu Firth in July 1971. It was "a black slimy object" which left a trail of foam. A week before, a family had also seen a monster off the Longman. (Inverness Courier, 30 July 1971, quoted in Andreas Trottmann's Loch Ness Newsclipping Service, vol. 2, No. 4)
- Falmouth, Cornwall: In 1975, a strange beast was cast ashore at Durgan Beach, but later identified as a whale's skull. Jonathan

Downes has traced the skull and presents it in Fortean Times 95, p. 46. He is, however, incorrect in claiming nobody identified the thing before - I quoted the case in my article in Strange 8, p. 56 and gave the correct identification. However, the mag misprinted the date as 1875!

- Rhode Island, USA: In June 1996, Gary Hall and JT Pinney were fishing in the "Mad Monk" 22km off Block Island when they caught a 4m dead sea serpent. It had a spine, a small head and whiskers. Identities suggested include shark, ray and sturgeon. More infos in Fortean Times 95, p. 18.

- Grotte Chauvet, France: On February 5, 1997, the ZDF TV channel broadcast a documentary on this cave and showed the now famous picture of a strange beast. In the programme, it was identified as a great auk.

- Review of LeBlond and Bousfield: "Cadborosaurus", in INFO Journal 76, p. 54

KRAKEN

- New Zealand: The search for giant squids off New Zealand continues. According to an AP news report in the Süddeutsche Zeitung (28 January 1997, p. 12), carcasses up to 20 m in length have been washed ashore in New Zealand, others were found in whale's stomachs or in fishermen's nets. According to a Maori legend, the Polynesian discoverer Kupe led his people in the 10th century to the islands while he was hunting a giant squid. When they reached New Zealand, they killed and ate the beast. According to AP, sperm whales with scars of squid suckers up to one foot in diameter can be found (I doubt this). Now two teams of scientists start their hunt near Whakenui at the South Island (where Kupe made landfall). They will follow the sperm whales and are equipped with high-tech-cameras which they will use in the Kaikoura-Canon and at the Mernoo sandbank, some 200 km from there. Clyde Roper, of the New York Smithsonian Institute: "We do not know what they feed on, whether they travel alone or in shoals or how they orient themselves". The expeditions will lower cameras 3000 m deep to search for giant squids. The cameras will be equipped with bait, and a computerized instrument will measure the creatures, tape their noises, and measure depth, light intensity and other relevant data. The scientist will also try to learn as much as possible about the Kaikoura Canon, about which little is known. The researchers place much hope in cameras attached to sperm whales with a small needle in the blubber. There are already critics who call this animal misuse. The scientists, however, claim that the whales hardly feel the needle.

MARINE LIFE

- Whitehead Beach, Northern Queensland, Australia: A 27 year-old swimmer was attacked on January 25, 1997, by a shark which bit into his legs three times. (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 27 January 1997, p. 12)

MARINE FORTEANA

- A new theory explains the origin of deluge myths with a large flood caused by the Black Sea 7500 years ago. According to William Ryan and Walter Pittman, two New York scientists, the flood was caused by the Mediterranean flowing into the Black Sea, which had been a lake previously. (Der Spiegel 1/1997, p. 138)

CRYPTOZOOTOLOGY

- The beast of Val Ferret, which has caused losses among the sheep population of the Swiss mountain kanton of Wallis, has been positively identified as a wolf. Two genetic scientists from the University of Grenoble analysed droppings of the mysterious beasts and found them to be wolves. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 28 December 1996, p. 12)